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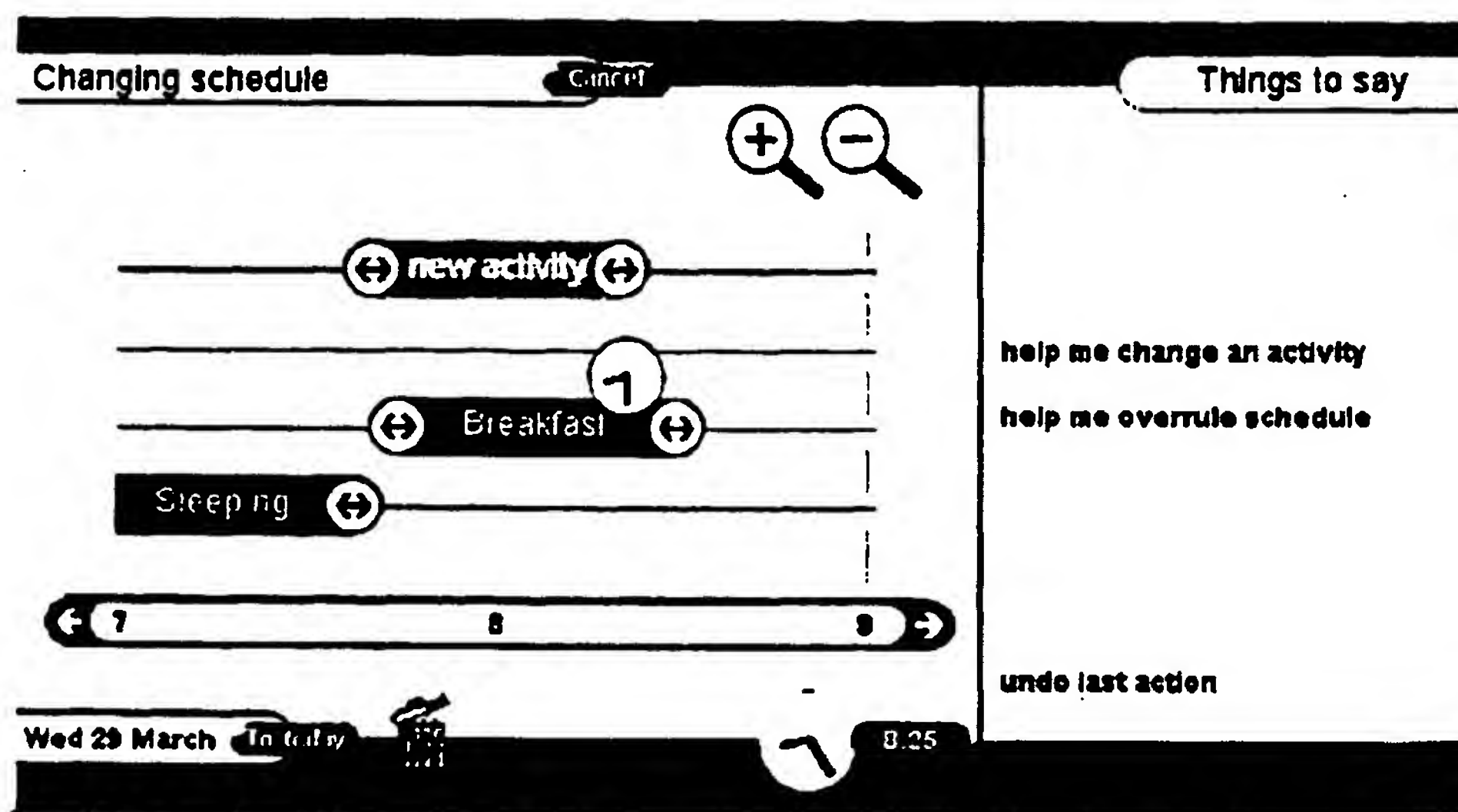
(43) International Publication Date
25 October 2001 (25.10.2001)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 01/79952 A1

- (51) International Patent Classification⁷: **G05D 23/19**
- (21) International Application Number: **PCT/NL01/00257**
- (22) International Filing Date: **28 March 2001 (28.03.2001)**
- (25) Filing Language: **Dutch**
- (26) Publication Language: **English**
- (30) Priority Data:
1014792 30 March 2000 (30.03.2000) **NL**
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- (81) Designated States (*national*): AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EE, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NO, NZ, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VN, YU, ZA, ZW.
- (84) Designated States (*regional*): ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE, TR), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).
- Published:
with international search report
- For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

(54) Title: **INTERFACE UNIT**



(57) Abstract: The invention relates to an interface unit comprising at least a display unit for communication with a user, which is designed for being coupled with a control unit for at least one or more parameters in a living or working environment, such as the temperature setting in a house, which control unit comprises a processor for receiving and processing data inputs and transmitting data outputs. The interface unit is designed for selecting for each room separately a desired temperature setting.

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Interface unit

The invention relates to an interface unit comprising at least a display unit for communication with a user, which is designed for being coupled with a control unit for at least one or more parameters in a living or
5 working environment, such as the temperature setting in a house, which control unit comprises a processor for receiving and processing data inputs and transmitting data outputs.

Such an interface unit is known, for example, in
10 the form of the thermostatic device brought on the market by Honeywell, and by means of which the desired temperature range in a principal living space can be defined in a 24-hour pattern. By means of this it is possible to differentiate between the temperature range during the week
15 and in the weekend.

Such an interface unit, which is designed for selecting for each room separately a desired temperature setting, is known from WO 97/39392.

It is the object of the invention to optimize the
20 known interface unit with respect to use and application possibilities such that the same is simpler to operate and provides more application possibilities.

To this end the interface unit in a first aspect of the invention is characterized in that the temperature
25 setting desired for each room is coupled with, and depends on an adjustable pattern of the user's activities. This makes it possible to realize a complex adjusting system comprising multi-adjustable parameters for each separate room, and being in addition dependent on the moment of the
30 day that is defined by the activity relevant to that moment. In this way it is possible to save energy as well as to realize optimal living comfort. This will be referred to later.

In order to realize the function just mentioned, the display unit in a first display preferably gives an outline of the possible selectable rooms, the desired and the actual temperature for at least one selected room, and
5 a first adjusting member for adjusting the desired temperature in the selected room. In this way the various parameters relating to the temperatures in the various rooms of the house are grouped appropriately and clearly, which makes operation especially simple. The latter holds true
10 in particular if the adjusting member is shown on a touch screen, making it immediately operable.

It is further desirable that in a second display the display unit gives an outline of the activities set for a pre-selectable part of a day, and that it shows a
15 second adjusting member or members for setting, or adding to, or changing said activities. This also furthers the user-friendly operability aimed at with the interface unit according to the invention.

This operation may be further optimized in the
20 embodiment that is characterized in that the selection of an activity in the second display causes the first display pertaining to that selected activity to be retrieved in order to allow the adjustment of the desired temperatures.

As already mentioned above, it is preferred for
25 the interface unit to offer various options to be chosen from the group comprising at least: energy saving, comfort optimization.

In a third aspect of the invention the interface unit is characterized in that, based on a selected option
30 and subject to an observed pattern of activity of the user, the interface unit shows suggestions on the display unit for the adjustment of the settings or the activities, respectively. In this way a totally new method of influencing the living or working environment is created, in
35 which the optimization of comfort or the energy consumption, respectively, can take place in an intelligent deliberation between the user and the interface unit according to the invention. In this way the user retains the

possibility of making a specific adjustment to the various settings, so that the feeling of being master in his own living or working environment is not attacked. A simple way of operating is effectuated especially if the deliberation between system and user takes place via speech. In a first preferred embodiment it is therefore desirable for the image displayed on the display unit to show which verbal instructions are currently available. In a second preferred embodiment, the interface unit itself (also) audibly reproduces the verbal instructions currently available.

In yet another aspect of the invention, the interface unit is characterized in that the same is designed to register the desired settings for each user separately, and in the event of conflicting settings from different users, to show them on the display unit to allow selection of the desired settings.

Although in the foregoing the invention is presented as an interface unit for controlling the temperature settings in a living or working environment, the application of the interface unit is not limited thereto, but may equally effectively be implemented for the control of other types of devices, such as the control of the lighting and/or alarm system. One thing and another may of course also be integrated in a single system.

Although the foregoing description provides the person skilled in the art with an explanation of the invention that is explicit and complete enough for him to reproduce it, one exemplary embodiment will be discussed below for further elucidation. This exemplary embodiment is to be understood not to limit the protective scope of the appended claims.

To aid the discussion of this exemplary embodiment a drawing is enclosed, comprising the figures 1 to 4.

Figure 1 shows the interface's first display by a display unit relating to a main menu.

Figure 2 shows a second display that may be shown on the display unit and which relates to a personal activity schedule of a user.

Figure 3 shows a first display that is presented
5 after selection of an activity shown in accordance with figure 2.

Figure 4 shows a display shown on the display unit for the changing or addition of activities of a user.

As a rule the temperature of the different rooms
10 in a house can be selected within predetermined limits. To this end the user is able to change the respective settings. Figure 1, shows an exemplary main menu, in which on the left, the room options are mentioned; the actually selected room is printed in a rectangle. In the middle of
15 the display the desired and actual temperature pertaining to the selected room is shown, together with the adjusting member in the form of an arrow pointing up and down with which the temperature setting can be changed. On the right of the display, various options are shown that a user may
20 select, such as saving energy and optimizing comfort. In this display it is also possible to adjust the activity schedule via the interface unit.

Figure 2, shows the appropriate activity schedule of an individual user. These activities are presented on
25 different bars, the starting point and end of each activity being controllable by means of operating icons, which are in themselves obvious. At the top right, slightly off centre in the display, two magnifying glasses are shown which are symbolic for the possibility of showing the entire activity schedule (by enlarging the times scale) or
30 of showing only a part of the activity schedule (by reducing the time scale). In this second display, the bar showing the icon "new activity" is always displayed in order to continuously provide the possibility of adding activities.
35 ties.

Figure 3 shows the first display that appears when the activity represented in figure 2 by the icon "breakfast" is selected. In the present example the layout

of all floors of the respective house can be displayed. In the present case the ground floor is selected. At the same time the temperature settings and the actual temperature of the various rooms are shown wherein the user whose activity has been selected, can adjust the respective settings.

Figure 4 finally, shows an example of a display that can be used in order to make it possible to define new activities, to change activities or to add activities.

10 When the option saving energy or optimizing comfort is selected as shown in figure 1, other functions become available. For example, by selecting the option saving energy, the interface unit is able to suggest changes in the activity schedule, based on an actually observed
15 activity pattern, or on the presence of the user. To implement these suggestions, authorization or confirmation by the respective user is always required. The interface unit according to the invention provides the additional possibility to, by means of one single instruction, postpone the entire activity schedule relating to a particular
20 day and relating to a particular user, for a predetermined time.

In the example shown, the input of instructions takes place by means of speech. In the figures 1 to 4, at
25 the right, the possible relevant instructions that may be "understood" by the interface unit are shown on the display unit (see the part "Things to say". These possible instructions are at the same time adjusted to the possibilities of that moment, pertaining to the display shown,
30 and may preferably also be audibly reproduced by the interface unit.

If different users operate, and are authorized to operate the interface unit, the interface unit is preferably embodied such that the settings are registered separately for each user, and that in the event of conflicting
35 settings, the display unit shows the conflicting settings on the display unit in order to allow the users to conclusively determine the desired settings.

CLAIMS

1. An interface unit comprising at least a display unit for communication with a user, which is designed for being coupled with a control unit for at least one or more parameters in a living or working environment, such as the temperature setting in rooms of a house, which control unit comprises a processor for receiving and processing data inputs and transmitting data outputs, which interface unit is designed for selecting for each room separately a desired temperature setting, characterized in that the temperature setting desired for each room is coupled with, and depends on an adjustable activities pattern of at least one user.

2. An interface unit according to claim 1, characterized in that the display unit in a first display preferably gives an outline of the possible selectable rooms, the desired and the actual temperature for at least one selected room, and a first adjusting member for adjusting the desired temperature in the selected room.

3. An interface unit according to claim 1 or 2, characterized in that in a second display the display unit gives an outline of the activities set for a pre-selectable part of a day, and that it shows a second adjusting member or members for setting, or adding to, or changing said activities.

4. An interface unit according to claims 2 and 3, characterized in that the selection of an activity in the second display causes the first display pertaining to that selected activity to be retrieved in order to allow the adjustment of the desired temperatures.

5. An interface unit according to one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the interface unit offers various options to be chosen from the group comprising at least: energy saving, comfort optimization.

6. An interface unit according to claim 5, characterized in that based on a selected option and subject to an observed pattern of activity of the user, the interface unit shows suggestions on the display unit for the
5 adjustment of the settings or the activities, respectively.

7. An interface unit according to one of the preceding claims, characterized in that the same is voice-controlled.

10 8. An interface unit according to claim 5, characterized in that the image displayed on the display unit shows which verbal instructions are currently available.

9. An interface unit according to claim 7 or 8, characterized in that the same audibly reproduces the verbal
15 instructions currently available.

10. An interface unit according to one of the claims 1-9, characterized in that the interface unit is designed to register the desired settings for each user separately, and in the event of conflicting settings from
20 different users, to show them on the display unit to allow selection of the desired settings.

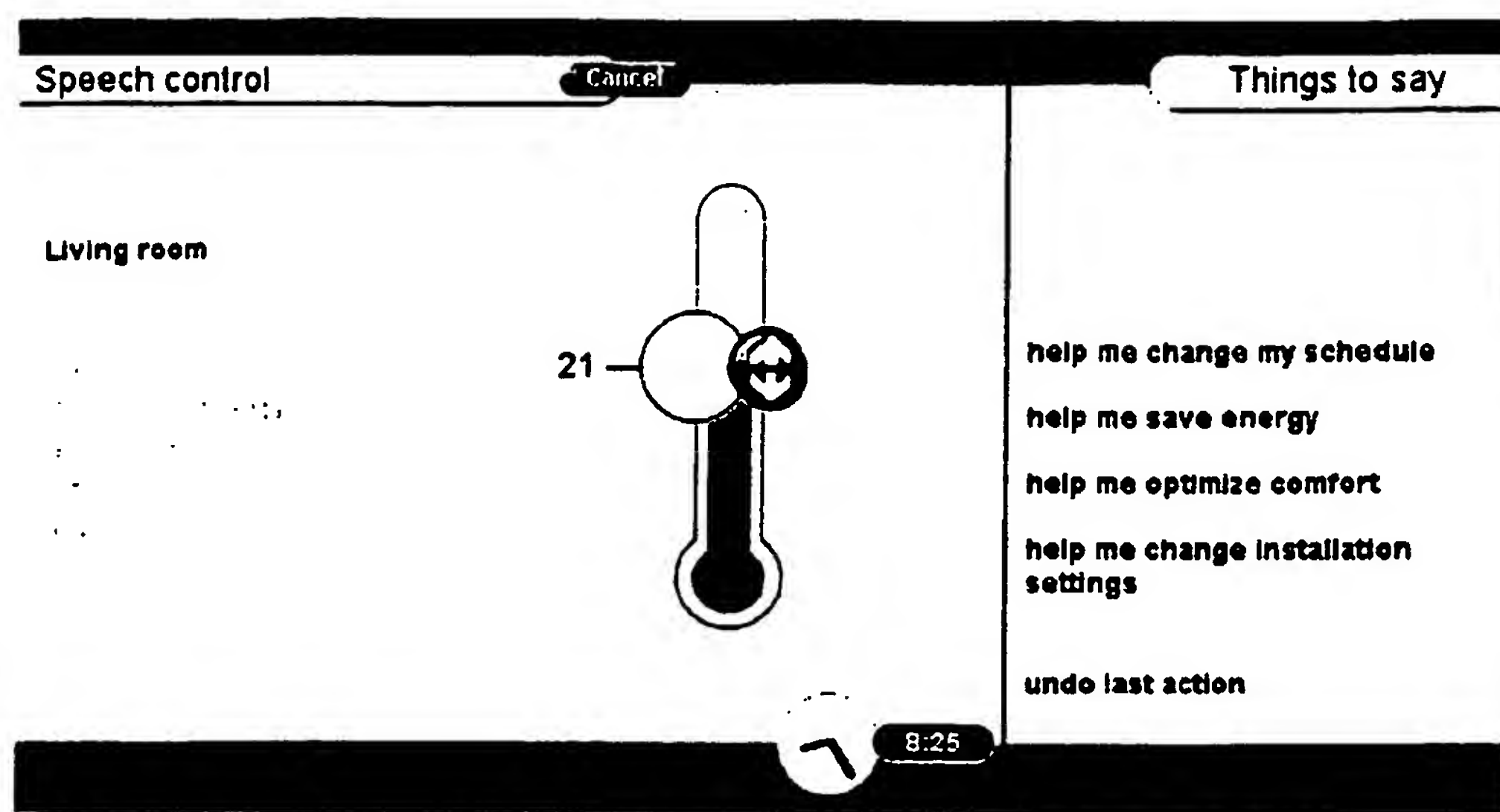


FIG. 1

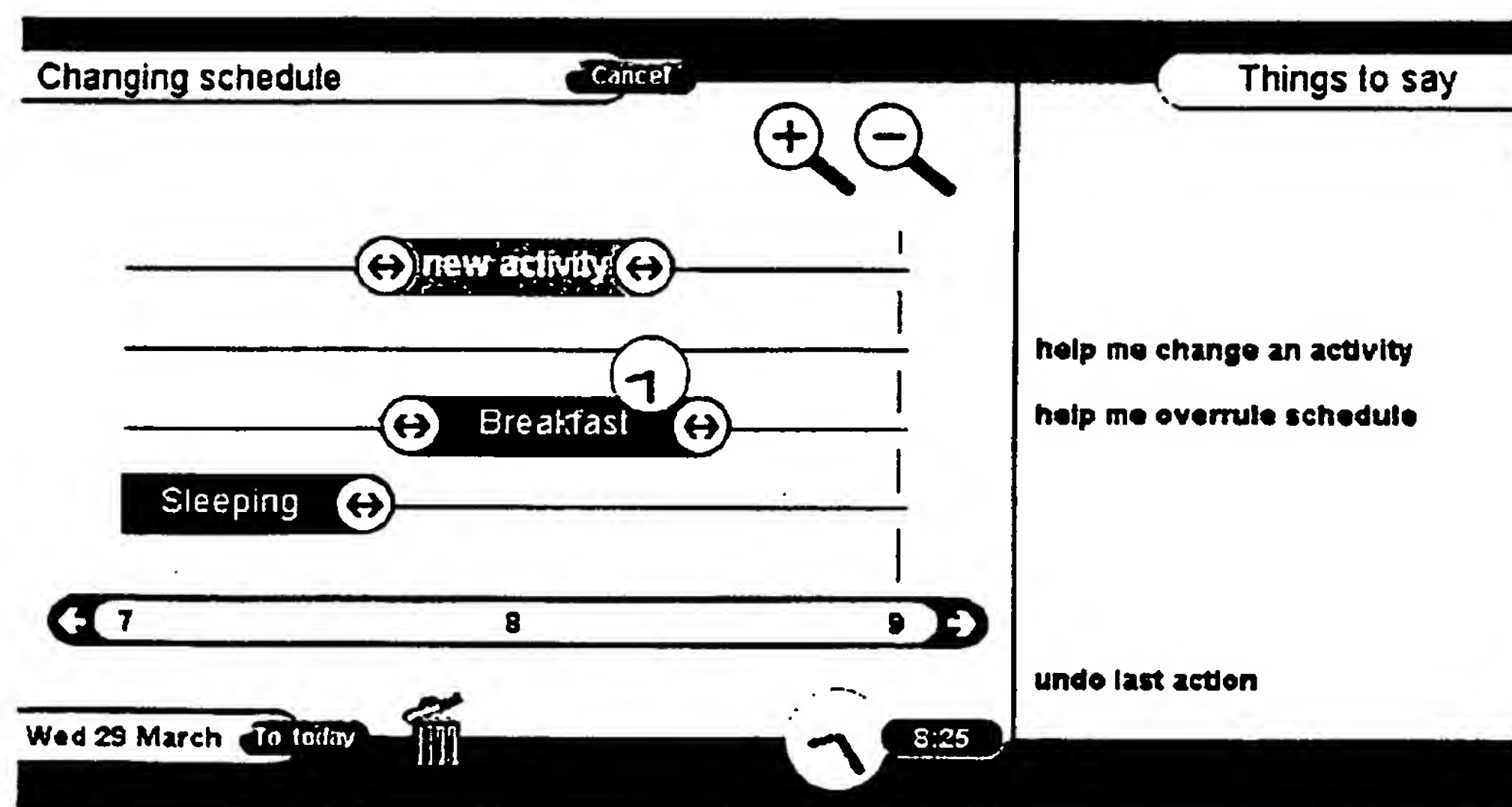


FIG. 2

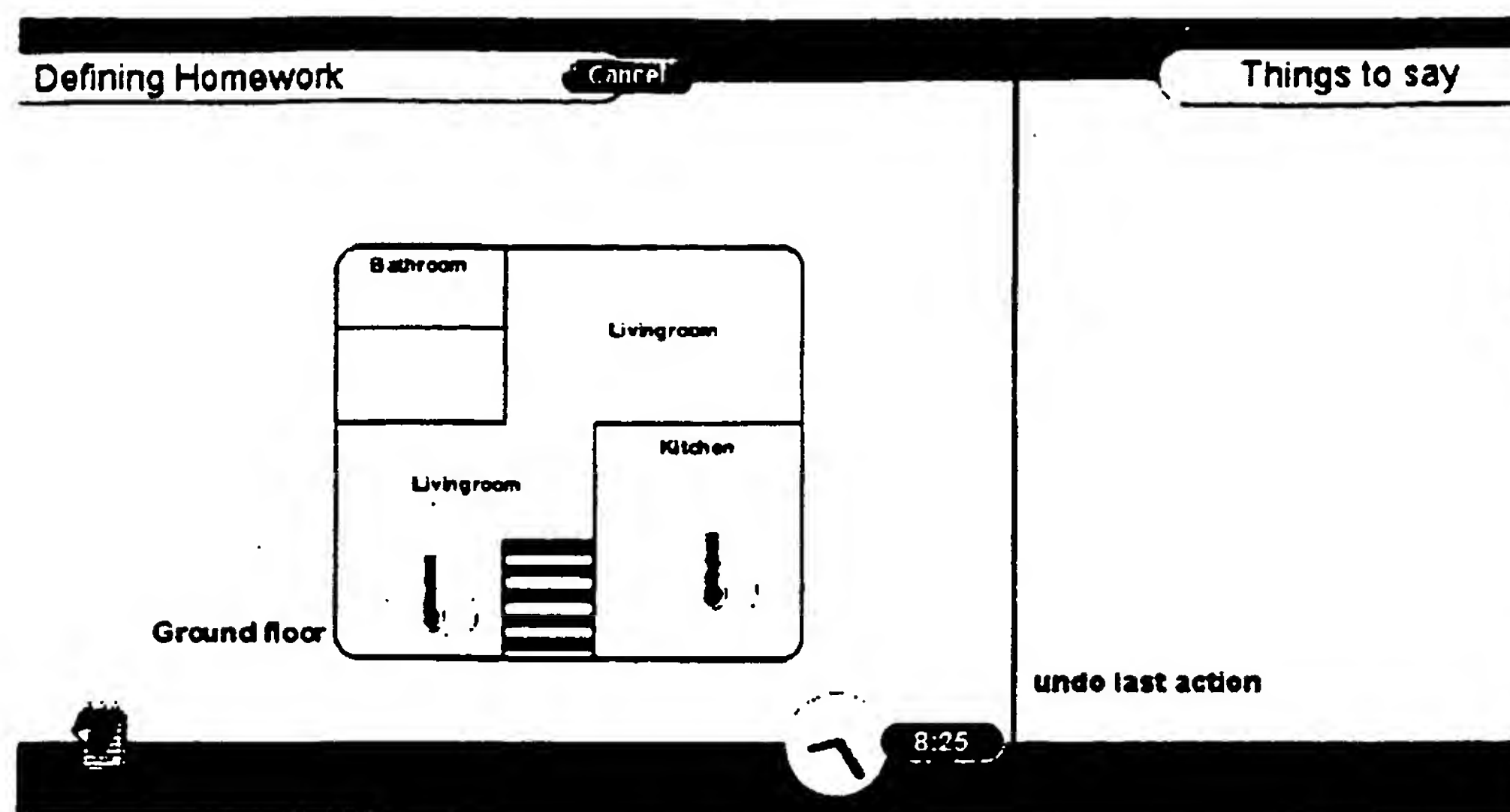


FIG. 3

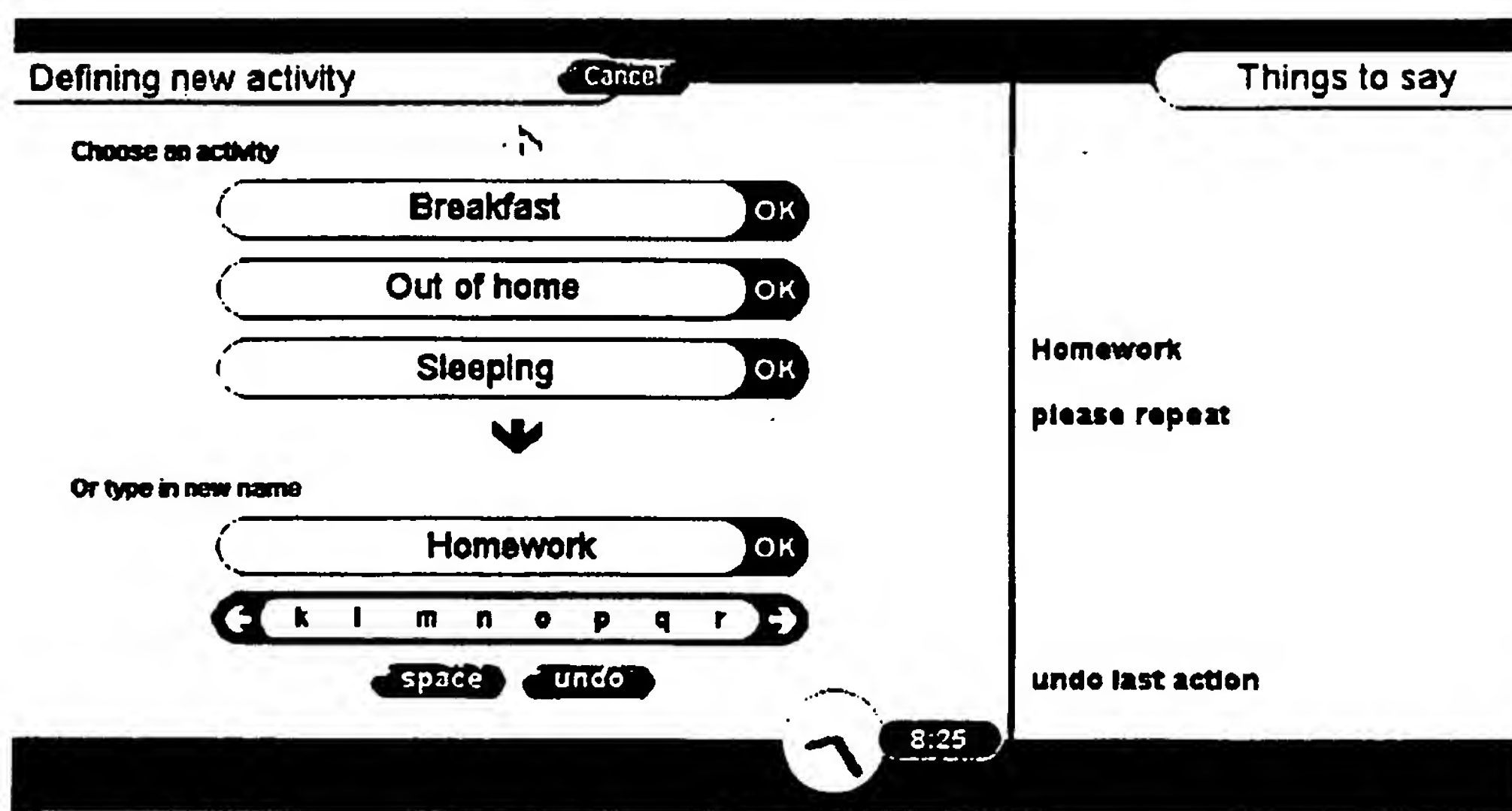


FIG. 4

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No

.../NL 01/00257

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
IPC 7 G05D23/19

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC 7 G05D

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

EPO-Internal, PAJ

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	WO 97 39392 A (E. HANAZEDER) 23 October 1997 (1997-10-23) cited in the application	1-3
Y	page 6, paragraph 2 -page 7, paragraph 1; figure 3	5,7
X	US 5 449 319 A (DUSHANE ET AL.) 12 September 1995 (1995-09-12) column 11, line 14 -column 12, line 8; figure 12A	1-3
Y	FR 2 762 470 A (F. SCARELLA) 23 October 1998 (1998-10-23) page 2, line 7 - line 21; figure 1	5
Y	US 4 516 207 A (M. MORIYAMA ET AL) 7 May 1985 (1985-05-07) abstract; figure 1	7

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☒ Patent family members are listed in annex.

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Date of the actual completion of the international search

11 July 2001

Date of mailing of the international search report

19/07/2001

Name and mailing address of the ISA

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International Application No

PCT/NL 01/00257

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CORRECTED VERSION

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date
25 October 2001 (25.10.2001)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 01/79952 A1

(51) International Patent Classification⁷: G05D 23/19

(21) International Application Number: PCT/NL01/00257

(22) International Filing Date: 28 March 2001 (28.03.2001)

(25) Filing Language: Dutch

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:
1014792 30 March 2000 (30.03.2000) NL

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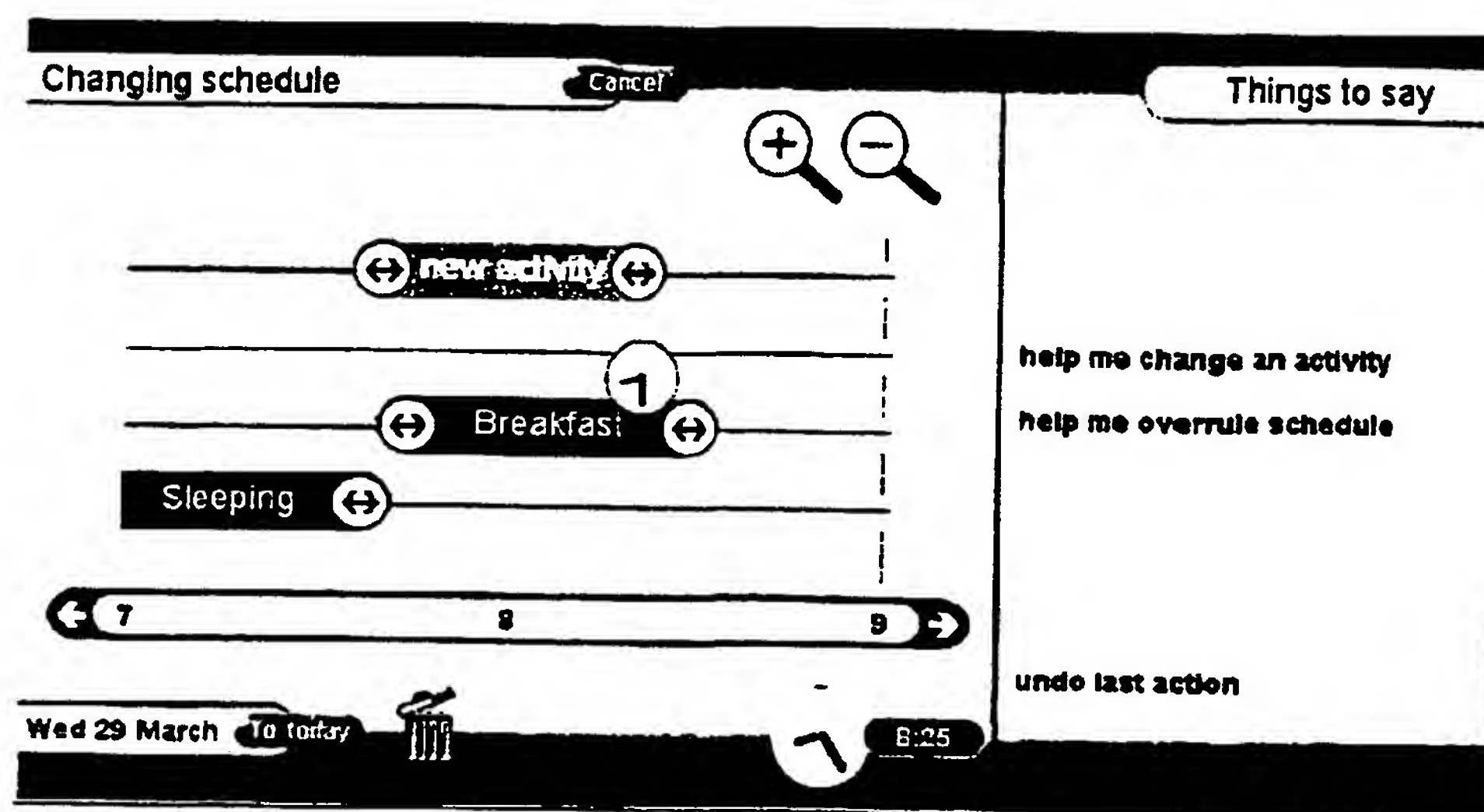
(74) Agent: VAN BREDA, Jacques; Octrooibureau Los en Stigter B.V., Weteringschans 96, NL-1017 XS Amsterdam (NL).

(81) Designated States (national): AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EE, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NO, NZ, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VN, YU, ZA, ZW.

(84) Designated States (regional): ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE, TR), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: INTERFACE UNIT



(57) Abstract: The invention relates to an interface unit comprising at least a display unit for communication with a user, which is designed for being coupled with a control unit for at least one or more parameters in a living or working environment, such as the temperature setting in a house, which control unit comprises a processor for receiving and processing data inputs and transmitting data outputs. The interface unit is designed for selecting for each room separately a desired temperature setting.



Published:

— *with international search report*

For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

(48) Date of publication of this corrected version:

3 January 2002

(15) Information about Correction:

see PCT Gazette No. 01/2002 of 3 January 2002, Section II

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